

In his application of historical evidence, Holland appears most influenced by people of a similar academic background (at one point, five geographers receive mention in the space of two pages); also by ecologists; and less so by historians and their work. We, however, have the most to gain from him, since his approach to material differs from how most historians would look at it. Throughout (and notably so when marshalling data on climate), he, like historians, includes primary quotes, but they are not there to make a point or forward an argument on their own merit. Rather, he produces them to illustrate the data types classified within categories, which he displays in tabular form, then analyzes in graphic form. The changing frequency with which kinds of remarks or events crop up, rather than individual occurrences, informs his conclusions. The emphasis is on rigour more than on inspiration.

Every part of this book has its insights and rewards, but the most stimulating chapter is the last. Until then, Holland tends to hold himself in by constant referral back to all those diary entries: these are pages which demonstrate a justifiable constraint, while stating and supporting a case. There is sometimes just one paragraph near the end of a chapter that succinctly slots the evidence into an ecologically informed overview. In the final chapter, however, he gives free rein both to his ecological approach and to his vision of southern New Zealand's rural future. 'After relocating to a new place,' he writes, 'or when experiencing accelerated environmental change, living things encounter new opportunities and challenges and must respond effectively to them if they are to survive' (p.190). Holland applies this understanding not only to indigenous and exotic biota, to stock and crops, and to pests and weeds, but also to people. The new generation must learn that 'sustainable and economically productive landscapes in the plains and low hill country of southern New Zealand should comprise functional, managed mosaics of mostly native and largely artificial ecological systems' (p.211).

Home in the Howling Wilderness can be read for pleasure, since Holland, almost despite his discipline and his method, has nevertheless managed to present an intriguing and chronologically forward-moving narrative of environmental change. Most importantly, though, it is a deep and respectful study of the practices of European settlers in response to the opportunities and challenges of a particular but varied landscape. Holland forces us to look again at earlier assumptions about environmental attitudes, and in doing so he employs techniques all too rarely applied to historical material. On both scores this book, while fairly short, can teach us a great deal.

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Extra! Extra! How The People Made The News. By David Hastings. Auckland University Press, Auckland, 2013. 287pp. NZ price: \$45. ISBN 9781869407384.

Much has been written about the media by scholars from a variety of disciplines strong on theoretical ideas, but with little or no practical experience of journalism. David Hastings's engaging account of the emergence of newspapers in Auckland in the second half of the nineteenth century clearly demonstrates how an historical narrative can be greatly enhanced by analysis grounded in an understanding of the realities of the news industry.

More than 20 years ago, Patrick Day chronicled the rise and fall of newspapers in Aotearoa/New Zealand between 1840 and 1880 in his excellent study *The Making of the New Zealand Press*. A key theme was that our early (and consistently short-lived) newspapers were partisan and generally reliant on political patronage, but that from the 1860s newspapers were launched

primarily as businesses by proprietors intending to be in for the long haul. Rather than being overtly partisan, newspapers manifested 'an aura of neutrality' – an approach, Day argued, driven by commercial imperatives.

Hastings challenges analyses shaped by political economy-based theories by focusing on the four most significant Auckland newspapers in the late nineteenth century – the *New Zealander*, the *Southern Cross*, the *New Zealand Herald* and the *Auckland Evening Star*. The thrust of his argument is that 'contrary to the notion that news was invented by commercialism, the reality was more of a discovery that certain topics had always been interesting to people and had commercial value when packaged, printed and sold'. He also argues that the commercial motive and need to attract readers were just as strong in the 1840s and 1850s.

Hastings the historian demonstrates convincingly that the rise or demise of these newspapers rested ultimately on their ability to deliver news that readers found interesting, relevant, entertaining and timely, rather than table-thumping editorials in the pursuit of political objectives. This was personified in Henry Brett of the successful *Evening Star* (later *Auckland Star*), for whom being first with the news was the key to a paper's success – together with prudent financial management.

Hastings the journalist spins a rollicking yarn, fleshing out the colourful and frequently flawed characters at the centre of Auckland journalism by drawing on letters, diaries, memoirs and other records. My first reporting job was at the *Auckland Star* and my arrival coincided with the paper's centenary celebrations. I heard stories of how Henry Brett as a shipping reporter would row out to sailing ships, doing whatever was needed to be first to 'garner and glean' the London newspapers passengers had brought with them. I now know the lengths he and others would go to in pursuit of a scoop or to obstruct rivals. Hastings evokes the urgency and intensity of the race for news with well-chosen anecdotes.

Where Hastings is less convincing is in addressing media theory in his introduction. It is too superficial and the range of ideas addressed too limited to satisfy the expectations of an academic work and I doubt that the general reader would find it particularly helpful. If media theory was to be an important part of the context-setting then, for example, notions of agenda-setting and what constitutes news would have been highly pertinent.

That said, *Extra! Extra!* is an important contribution to New Zealand newspaper history and a damned good read.

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National Day and the Politics of Indigenous and Local Identities in Australia and New Zealand. By Patrick A. McAllister. Carolina University Press, Durham, 2013. 230pp. NZ price: \$80.50. ISBN 9781594608148.

The book provides a detailed comparative study of national days in Australia and New Zealand. The research covers both national and local variants of the events, conducted through historical research and ethnographic field studies. The major strength of the book is in its comparative analysis, which clearly sets out the different historical contexts in which settler colonialism has developed and the different contexts in which the national days are celebrated or resisted. The movement between national and local variants and their political contexts is generally well researched and supported by the historical and ethnographic research. By way of comparison, however, it is the differences rather than the broad similarities that are the most revealing and